Amanda Adrian in “Professional Development Openers and Icebreakers” <http://www.choiceliteracy.com/articles-detail-view.php?id=1159>

Most of the professional development I offer is ongoing - I meet with groups multiple times as part of a series focused on one topic. Because each session is connected to the last, I like an opener that reviews concepts previously taught; engages participants in focused dialogue; and gets participants up and moving. "Did you know?" is a simple structure that accomplishes all three. Here's how it goes:

1. Each participant is given a card that has been prepared earlier by me. An example of a "Did you know?" card would read: "Did you know?...Minilessons are a time for explicit, focused instruction." Each includes a different key point that was taught during a previous session.

2. Participants stand up and pair up with a partner. I encourage teachers to find a partner with whom they don't typically work (i.e., from a different school or grade level).

3. One partner begins by reading her card. "Did you know? . . . Minilessons are a time for explicit, focused instruction?" The other partner responds to the question. It may sound something like this: "I did know that, but sometimes I struggle to keep minilessons mini."

4. Partners then switch roles and repeat, using the card belonging to the second partner.

5. Partners trade cards and head out to repeat the process with a new partner.

6. I end the activity when participants have had a chance to hear and share several "Did you know?" cards.

After a long school day, "Did you know?" gives teachers an opportunity to get their blood flowing, their intellectual wheels turning, and their prior knowledge activated. Off we go . . . ready both mentally and physically for new learning.

1. Did you know? … Text sets feature a range of genres including articles, posters, ads, poetry, etc.
2. Did you know? … Mini-units include a variety of ways to respond to text.
3. Did you know? … Mini-units can lead to a finished piece of writing.
4. Did you know? … Mini-units help students mess around with how an idea grows and changes.
5. Did you know? … A goal of a mini-unit is to cite sources.
6. Did you know? … A goal of a mini-unit is to accumulate into the writing of an argument.
7. Did you know? … A text set should offer various opinions.
8. Did you know? … A text set should grow in complexity.
9. Did you know? … A text set should include several reading levels.
10. Did you know? … A mini-unit should engage students with close reading strategies.
11. Did you know? … A goal of Year 2 is students read and write arguments daily.
12. Did you know? … A goal of Year 2 is teachers routinely examine student work to assess effectiveness.
13. Did you know? … Researching and writing arguments improve student learning beyond specific skills in writing.
14. Did you know? … Argument is the common language of academic writing.
15. Did you know? … Teachers are the agents of reform.
16. Did you know? … Teachers who are well informed and effective in their practice can be successful teachers of other teachers.
17. Did you know? … **Good arguments begin with looking at the data that is likely to become the evidence in an argument and which gives rise to a thesis statement or major claim.**
18. Did you know? … Teachers should shift from their roles as question askers into roles of problem posers.